

## TRICKS OF A HYPNOTIST.

### A Professional Subject Fools a Number of Physicians.

He Goes Through All the Catalogue of Manifestations and Laughs at the Efforts of the Mesmerizers—Insensibility to Pain.

Mr. Ernest Hart, editor of the London Medical Journal, reveals many of the tricks of professional hypnotists in an article in the Century, entitled "The Eternal Gullible." After quoting literally from the confession made to him by a hypnotic subject, L., Mr. Hart continues:

Being curious to study the technic of so exceptionally gifted an artist as "L.," I accepted his offer, to use his own elegant language: "To give a show at my house." I invited several medical acquaintances interested in hypnotism, including Dr. J. Milne Bramwell, Dr. Hack Tuke, Dr. Outtersson Wood, Surgeon Colonel J. B. Hamilton, Mr. Wingfield and others, to be present on the occasion. L. brought two other subjects with him, one of these was introduced by him as his cousin, but there was so strong a family likeness between the three that they might easily have passed for brothers. There are few people who, as Sydney Smith said of Francis Horner, "have the ten commandments written on their faces." It is, therefore, not the fault of these ingenious youths that their physiognomy is not exactly, to put it delicately, such as would generally be accepted as a guarantee of good faith. They went through all their ordinary "platform" business, simulating the hypnotic sleep, performing various antics "under control," and in particular "going through catalepsy," to use my friend's own phrase.

Not the least interesting part of the "show" was the preliminary hypnotization of L. by the demonstrator of physiology already referred to, whose eyes had not yet been opened to the fact that he had been imposed upon. When he commanded L. to "sleep," the latter obediently did so, with all the usual appearances of profound hypnotization, muscular relaxation, facial congestion, upturned eyeballs, not moving when touched, apparent insensibility, stertor, insensibility to sound, light, and external stimuli. The performance was splendid and complete. Mr. — enjoyed a moment's triumph. But L. instantly woke up again with a leer as soon as the operator announced that he was "under influence." Mr. — made several further attempts to hypnotize his former subject, each time with the same result. The situation was comic, yet had in it an element of pathos; the operator was so earnest a believer that the shock of his awakening was almost painful to witness.

L.'s performance was not destitute of merit, but to the critical judgment it left a good deal to be desired. He overdid his part, the congestion of his face being exaggerated to a degree almost suggestive of impending apoplexy,

while his snoring somewhat overstepped the modesty of nature. These points were dwelt on by more than one of the gentlemen present, but I am not altogether free from a suspicion that in some of the cases at least the observation was of an ex-post-facto nature.

One of L.'s companions seemed to me to simulate the hypnotic sleep better than he did, but L. at once dispelled any illusion there might have been by unexpectedly gripping him behind the knee. Some exhibitions of "post-hypnotic suggestion" given by the two were well calculated to tickle the groundlings in a music hall, but could hardly have deceived any serious observer. The "catalepsy business" had more artistic merit. So rigid did L. make his muscles that he could be lifted in one piece like an Egyptian mummy. He lay with his head on the back of one chair, and his heels on another, and allowed a fairly heavy man to sit on his stomach; it seemed to me, however, that he was here within a "straw" or two of the limits of his endurance. The "blister trick," spoken of by Truth as having deceived some medical men, was done by rapidly biting and sucking the skin of the wrist. L. did manage with some difficulty to raise a slight swelling, but the marks of the teeth were plainly visible.

One point in L.'s exhibition which was undoubtedly genuine was his remarkable and stoical endurance of pain. He stood before us smiling and open-eyed while he ran long needles into the fleshy parts of his arms and legs without flinching, and he allowed one of the gentlemen present to pinch his skin in different parts with strong crenated pincers in a manner which bruised it, and which to most people would have caused intense pain. L. allowed no sign of suffering or discomfort to appear; he did not set his teeth or wince; his pulse was not quickened, and the pupil of his eye did not dilate as physiologists tell us it does when pain passes a certain limit. It may be said that this merely shows that in L. the limit of endurance was beyond the normal standard, or, in other words, that his sensitiveness was less than that of the average man. At any rate, his performance in this respect was so remarkable that some of the gentlemen present were fain to explain it by a supposed "post-hypnotic suggestion," the theory apparently being that L. and his comrades hypnotized one another, and thus made themselves insensible to pain.

#### Delaware Sturgeon.

"Albany beef" is the euphuism on the shores of the Delaware for sturgeon meat. Doubtless the term goes back to a time when the Hudson sturgeon fisheries were really important. The meat, cut into long, thick chunks and kept in cold storage, was recently an important article of commerce a few miles above the head of Delaware bay, but the sturgeon fisheries in the Delaware, as elsewhere on the Atlantic coast, have greatly fallen off in importance. The sturgeon is the hated enemy of the shad fishermen, as he destroys their light nets.

## ARABLE AREA OF CANADA.

Confined to a Narrow Strip Along the Border of the United States.

Some Canadians ostentatiously boast that their colony is of greater area than the republic of the United States, while they quietly ignore the facts that about one-half of their dependency is covered with perpetual or all but perpetual snow and ice, and that no small part of the remainder is but sparsely inhabited or habitable except by Indians and Indian-French half-breeds, who eke out a precarious subsistence by fishing, by the scanty proceeds from slaughtering fur-bearing animals, and on meager government rations. The arable portion of Canada, says the Springfield Republican, is in general but a very broken and irregular fringe on the northern boundary of the United States; and although the European settlement of the country began nearly 300 years ago, its present population is only about 5,000,000—from the Atlantic to the Pacific—or over 250,000 less than the population of the state of Pennsylvania! Canada to-day consists of but seven provinces. One of these, Prince Edward island, is a little more than one-fifth the area of the little state of Vermont, and another, British Columbia, a sea of mountains—covering some 350,000 square miles—contains less arable land than the comparatively small contiguous state of Washington. The desirable land for tillage in the three small maritime provinces of Nova Scotia, Prince Edward island and New Brunswick is now chiefly occupied by an excellent Scotch-English people, whose number is all but stationary or retrograde. About one-half of what is claimed to be the Province of Quebec is sparsely inhabited by Indians, Canadian-French half-breeds and the hardiest of "habitans." Much of the remainder, on both banks of the River St. Lawrence and on the northeast bank of the Ottawa river, is a good quality of soil, and the greater part of it is now densely populated by Canadian French.

A portion of the province of Quebec, consisting of about 100 townships, called the eastern townships, lying between the parishes south of the St. Lawrence and the northern boundaries of the states of New York, Vermont and New Hampshire, is good general farming land, now in great part occupied by a mixed population composed of "old country" English-speaking people, Canadian French and some descendants of the New England royalists of the last century. For many years the English-speaking people have been steadily nearing a minority. There are at present but two cities of any considerable size and business importance in the whole of Canada—the one, Montreal, in the province of Quebec, making a population (about two-thirds Canadian-French) of somewhat over 200,000; and the other, Toronto, the capital of the province of Ontario, with a population (mostly English-speaking) something below 200,000. There are also seven other considerable towns called "cities," ranging from about 25,000 to 60,000 inhabitants; eleven from 50,000 to about